

—and not in an immodest way—that people frequently hand him broken equipment that will work in his hands. He's a healer and he refuses payment for his labor. I shoot his picture before departing with my reborn camera.

We visitors have been seeing the sights each day and enjoying the hospitality arranged by our hosts, but on the way home from dinner each evening I stop for a nightcap at Brophy's Tavern, which is just a block up the hill from my digs. It's a comfortable spot and, but for the five or six tv screens showing sports, seems to have a traditional pub atmosphere. Audio for all those screens is mercifully turned off, so conversation for those at the bar and at the tables is possible. My drink the first evening is a craft beer at \$6 for a pint. The second night I'm in the mood for maybe one glass of good whiskey. The barman is wearing a Cali baseball cap in a style that covers the top of his ears. He doesn't look like any of the guys who poured for me in Edinburgh, but he's pleasant and seems to understand single malts. He has several options in the category, and holds up a couple of esoteric bottles he assumes I might recognize. His trump card is a Glenfiddich, a label with which I am familiar. But this is the 18-year old Glenfiddich and better, in his opinion, than a couple of the other, more-exotic options.

It is splendid. I am getting down to the last couple of sips when Cali pours a substantial refresher of the 18-year old into the glass. That's happened to me with beer, but never before with a cali whiskey—at least not in a house where I'm a stranger. Our group of writers has been walking the streets and lanes of Carmel all day and into the evening. I'm getting tired, but Vagabond's House is just a block away—and downhill. The tab for my drink is \$19 and I add a decent tip before heading for home. All's right with the world.

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles about Carmel. Others will run during April.

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